

REMARKS

The Official Action mailed February 26, 2008 has been carefully considered. Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 14 are pending in the present application and stand rejected. Claims 1 and 13 have been amended. Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to recite that “a coating of 2 μm to 3 μm in thickness consisting essentially of said thiol compound is formed directly on the metal surface [or the galvanized steel].” Support for this amendment may be found in paragraph [0041] of the published application, which recites: “the thickness of the coatings is typically in the range of 2 to 3 μm .” No new matter has been entered by this amendment.

Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 1-3, 7-8 and 10-11 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Reihs et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,652,669.

As noted above, the presently amended claims are now directed to a coating of 2 μm to 3 μm in thickness consisting essentially of a thiol compound formed directly on the metal surface [or the galvanized steel]. Reihs does not appear to disclose such a coating thickness and, therefore, Reihs fails to render obvious providing a coating of such thickness. In addition, as noted in the Response of February 14, 2008, Reihs also does not disclose the presently claimed concentration or the presently claimed treatment times, thus it does not appear, without more evidence, that one might gather from the teachings of Reihs the presently claimed coating thickness. Accordingly, there does not appear to be any teaching or suggestion in Reihs as to how one might arrive at the coating thickness presently claimed.

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-8 10-11 and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 10-001784.

Once again, as noted above, the presently amended claims are now directed to a coating of 2 μm to 3 μm in thickness consisting essentially of a thiol compound formed directly on the

metal surface [or the galvanized steel]. JP '784 fails to render obvious such a coating thickness. More specifically, JP '784 does not appear to disclose such a coating thickness. In addition, as noted in the Response of February 14, 2008, the '784 reference does not appear to disclose providing a thiol solution in the range of 20 to 50 mM and treating the metal with the solution in the range of 3 to 11 seconds. Thus, it does not appear that one might gather from the teachings of the '784 reference that a coating thickness of 2 μm to 3 μm may be provided. Accordingly, there does not appear to be any teaching or suggestion in the '784 reference as to how one might arrive at the coating thickness presently claimed herein.

Having dealt with all the objections raised by the Examiner, it is respectfully submitted that the present application, as amended, is in condition for allowance. Thus, early allowance is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner desires personal contact for further disposition of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned Attorney at 603.668.6560.

In the event there are any fees due, please charge them to our Deposit Account No. 50-2121.

Respectfully submitted,

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